

CLAIMS

1. Device for laying rigid tubular pipes from a working platform of a laying vessel, the said pipes, which are designed to convey a fluid within, being laid by successively connecting at the said working platform pipe sections which are oriented in a direction between an inclined direction and a vertical direction, the said device comprising lower retaining means designed to retain a pipe and lower securing means designed to support the said retaining means at the said platform, upper retaining means being designed to retain the said pipe and being able to move translationally with respect to the said lower retaining means, characterized in that the said retaining means (24, 36) are designed to retain the said pipe (18) from the inside, and in that the said device additionally comprises upper securing means (22) to which the said lower retaining means (24) can be coupled through a pipe section (16) to be connected, in such a way as to release the said lower securing means (20) and to be able to secure thereto the said upper retaining means (36) after the said section (16) to be connected has been connected and submerged.
2. Laying device according to Claim 1, characterized in that the said retaining means (24, 36) include a locking sleeve (26) prolonged by a cleat (30), the said locking sleeve (26) being designed to be activated so as to expand inside the pipeline in order to be locked therein.
3. Laying device according to Claim 2, characterized in that the said lower retaining means (24) are provided with a centring sleeve (40) mounted between the said locking sleeve (26) and the said cleat (30), the said centring sleeve (40) being designed to extend between the said pipe (18) and a pipe section (16) to be connected.
4. Laying device according to either one of Claims 1 and 3, characterized in that the said lower retaining means (24) are coupled to the said upper securing means (22) by first means (34) forming a sling.
5. Laying device according to Claim 4, characterized in that the said

upper retaining means (36) are designed to be traversed freely by the said first sling-forming means (34).

6. Laying device according to Claim 4 or 5, characterized in that the
5 said upper securing means (22) comprise first means for translationally driving the said first sling-forming means (34).

7. Laying device according to any one of Claims 1 to 6, characterized
10 in that the said upper retaining means (36) are mounted on second means (38) forming a sling, the said second sling-forming means (38) being driven translationally by second drive means mounted on the said securing means (22).

8. Method of laying tubular pipes, characterized in that the laying
15 device according to any one of Claims 1 to 7 is used.

9. Laying method according to Claim 8, characterized in that it comprises the steps below in the following order:

- a) the said lower retaining means (24), which are fastened to a pipe
20 (13), are secured to the said lower securing means (20); then
- b) the said lower retaining means (24) are coupled to the said upper securing means (22) through a pipe section (16) to be connected, in such a way as to release the said lower securing means (20) and to connect the said section (16) and the said pipe (18); and
- 25 - c) the said upper retaining means (36) are secured to the said lower securing means (20) after the said connected section (16) has been submerged.

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